

2015 State of the County

Health Report

Carteret County, North Carolina



Background

All North Carolina Health Departments conduct Community Health Assessments (CHA) every three to four years and a State of the County Health Report (SOTCH) is prepared during intervening years. Carteret County's most recent CHA was completed in 2013. Primary data was collected through community opinion surveys adapted from the NC Division of Public Health Community Assessment Guidebook and key informant interviews. In addition, secondary data was collected, reviewed, and compared to data from North Carolina.

The 2013 Community Health Assessment Planning Team reviewed the data and chose the top health priorities for Carteret County based upon North Carolina's 2020 Health Objectives. Subsequently, the Board of Health approved the three priority areas; 1) Chronic Disease Control including Obesity, Cancer, and Heart Disease, 2) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Access, 3) Improve Economic Development for years 2013-2017.

This report highlights activities implemented over the past year to address the selected priority health areas. A presentation of this report is given to the Consolidated Health and Human Services Board and a press release is issued to local media outlets.

To access the 2013 Community Health Assessment or the 2015 SOTCH report contact 252-728-8550

Work has already begun on the 2016 Community Health Assessment which we are conducting in partnership with Carteret HealthCare. It will be completed in the Summer of 2016.

2013-2017

Health Priorities

- ◆ **Chronic Disease: Obesity, Cancer, and Heart Disease**
- ◆ **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Access**
- ◆ **Improve Economic Development**

Consolidated Human Services Board

In 2014, the Carteret County Health Department and Department of Social Services were consolidated into a Consolidated Human Services Agency. As a result, the Board of Health and DSS Board were merged to create a Consolidated Human Services Board.

For a full listing of Consolidated Human Services Board members, visit: www.carteretcountync.gov.

- ◆ **Carol Wray, Chair**
- ◆ **Dorothy Childress, Vice Chair**
- ◆ **David Atkinson, MSW**
Carteret County Director of Human Services
- ◆ **David Jenkins, MPA**
Carteret County Health Director/Deputy Director of Human Services





Take a Look Inside!

- ◆ County at a Glance
- ◆ Leading Causes of Death
- ◆ Improvements towards Health Priorities
- ◆ Emerging Issues/New Initiatives
- ◆ Health Department Program Updates

The Mission of the Carteret County Health Department is to promote and protect the highest standards of healthy living for all county citizens.

County at a Glance

Carteret County is centrally located on the North Carolina coastline and bordered on the north by the Pamlico Sound and east and south by the Atlantic Ocean. Geographically the County is defined by water and is approximately 1,064 square miles with a land area of 506 square miles. Carteret County is referred to as the “Crystal Coast.” Carteret is comprised of 10 municipalities with Beaufort being the county seat.

According to the US Census Bureau, the 2014 population estimate for the county is ~ 68,811 residents. The county population is racially composed of 89.7% Caucasian, 6.2% African American, 4.3% Hispanic, 1.2% Asian, 0.6% American Indian, 0.1% Native American or Pacific Islander, and 2.1% identify with two or more races. The median age of county residents is 47 years of age. The median income household income is \$46,534, and our poverty rate is 14.4%.

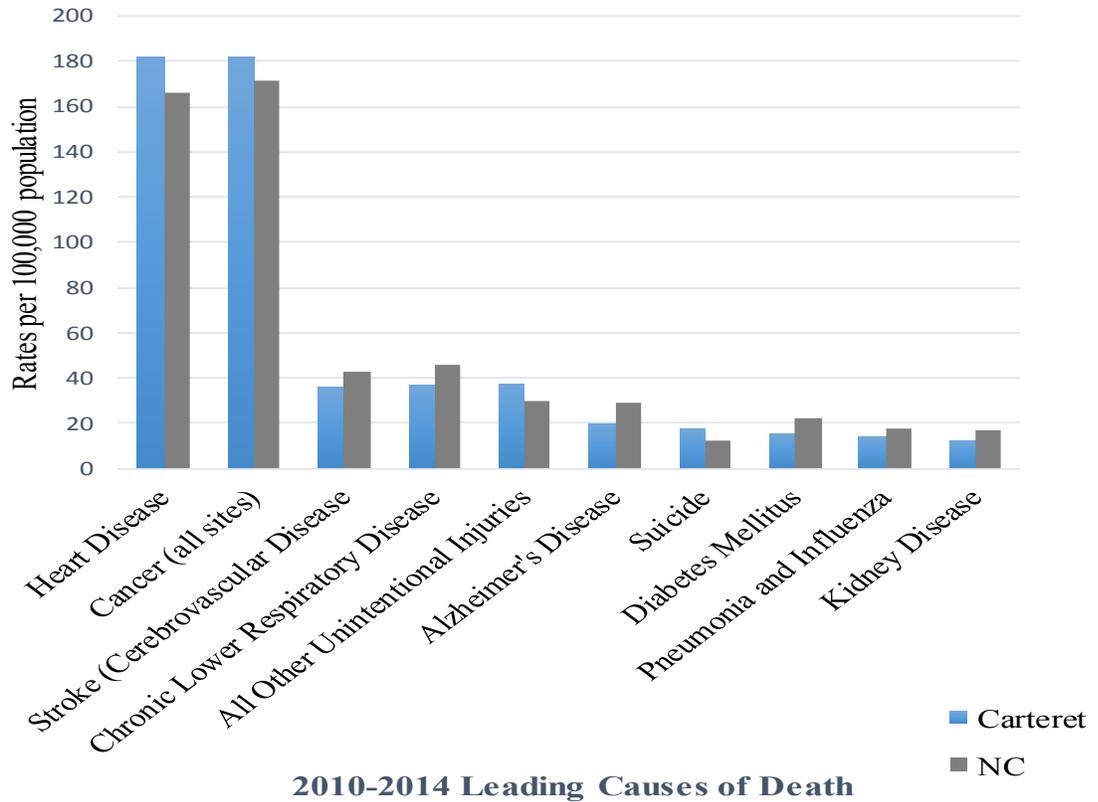
Major industries in the county include Tourism, Marine Trades, Marine Science, and Commercial and Recreational Fishing. The chart to the left shows the top ten employers in Carteret County for 2015.

Rank	Company
1	Carteret County Board of Education
2	Carteret County General
3	County of Carteret
4	Wal-Mart Associates, Inc
5	Food Lion
6	Big Rock Sports, Llc
7	Lowes Home Center Inc
8	Carteret Community College
9	NC Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources
10	Lowes Food Stores

Source: NC Commerce, Labor and Economic Analysis Division, 2015. http://accessnc.commerce.state.nc.us/docs/topEmployers/topEmp_37031.pdf

2015 Carteret County Leading Causes of Death

In 2015, Heart Disease was the leading cause of death in Carteret County followed by Cancer and Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease.



Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics , County –Level Data 2015 <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/data/>

The Top Five Inpatient Utilization Diagnosis for Carteret County Residents (excluding newborns and discharges from out of state hospitals) in 2014 were:

- 1- Cardiovascular and Circulatory Disease
- 2- Digestive System Disease
- 3-Respiratory Diseases
- 4- Injuries and Poisoning
- 5- Infectious & Parasitic Diseases

Source: NC County Health Data Book, 2016, NC

The above graph represents the leading causes of death in Carteret County compared to North Carolina during 2010-2014. *Data for 2015 will not be available until Fall of 2016.* The two leading causes of death are Heart Disease and Cancer followed by Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease and Stroke. When compared to North Carolina, Carteret County continues to have higher death rates for heart disease, cancer, all other unintentional injuries and suicide.

High blood pressure, obesity/overweight, poor nutrition, limited physical activity, high cholesterol, tobacco use and substance abuse are the most prevalent risk factors that can increase the chance of an individual developing a chronic disease. To address these diseases and injuries, Carteret County Health Department and its partners have developed action plans to provide policy and environmental change and education to help decrease risk factors associated with chronic disease and substance abuse/mental health.

In addition, Carteret County Health Department and partners identified through the 2013 Community Health Assessment (CHA) the importance to improve Economic Development/Smart Growth for the county. There is a strong, direct correlation between the economic outlook of our county and the overall health of our citizens.

We will highlight in this report the efforts of other county groups, coalitions and organizations as well, who are addressing these important health priorities.

Goals:

Increase the percentage of high school students who are neither overweight or obese.

Increase the percentage of adults getting the recommended amount of physical activity.

Increase the percentage of adults who consume five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day.

Healthy Priority: Chronic Disease Obesity, Cancer, and Heart Disease

Overview:

Obesity is a leading health issue for Carteret County. In the 2013 Community Health Assessment, 41.3% of survey respondents reported “yes” to being overweight or obese.¹ Overweight or being obese can complicate existing health problems which can increase a person developing chronic diseases or health conditions, and can substantially reduce their quality of life.

Risk factors such as poor diet and lack of physical activity, have a direct correlation to obesity/overweight. According to the CDC, people who are physically active usually find it easier to control weight, generally live longer, and have lower risk for stroke, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, depression and some cancers.²

Activities within Last Year

Carteret County Partnership for Children (SHAPE Carteret): Carteret County Health Department and Shape Carteret worked on collecting baseline data for reducing screen time in childcare centers and at home. The goal for 2016, is for three childcare centers to implement a reduce screen time policy. Shape Carteret implemented the “Exercise is Medicine” program for the county. This outreach provides physicians with the opportunity to prescribe physical activity to their patients. In 2015, the program was introduced to 25 doctor’s offices, providing 250 script pads and brochures. This program is continuing to recruit additional physicians. In addition, Shape Carteret partners volunteered on Saturdays at the Olde Beaufort Farmers’ Market to provide healthy food samples, recipes, and play activities for children. Also, Shape Carteret is working on developing a healthy kids menu program for restaurants. This will be implemented in 2016.



We’re into Crops (WIC) Community Garden: The Carteret County Health Department planted a six bed community garden for WIC clients and children. This garden supplies produce to clients and teaches about locally-grown produce with easy recipes. The health educator will be providing cooking classes in 2016 for clients.

Carteret County Schools (School Health Advisory Council (SHAC): All schools K-8 participate in the healthful living curriculum which focuses on health education and physical activity.

NC Cooperative Extension: Cooperative Extension offers a 4-H youth development program to children ages 5-19 to learn about healthy eating habits and life skills. Cooperative Extension is working with many partners to develop a local food advisory committee. In addition, Cooperative Extension and the Health Department are offering Grocery Store Tours to our WIC clients and will expanding in 2016 to SNAP recipients.



Goals:

Reduce the cardiovascular disease mortality rate.

Reduce the cancer mortality rate.

Increase the percentage of adults who are neither overweight nor obese.

Health Priority: Chronic Disease

Obesity, Cancer, and Heart Disease

Overview:

According to the North Carolina Center for Health Statistics, cancer and heart disease are the leading causes of death for Carteret County during 2010-2014.³ From 2010-2014, death rates due to cancer (182.0) have significantly decreased (192.7) since 2009-2013.⁴ Heart Disease has seen a decrease in death rates from (187.6) during 2009-2013 to (182.1) from 2010-2014.⁴ Despite mortality rates declining in cancer and heart disease, they continue to be the leading causes of death in Carteret County.

Cancer and heart disease are impacted by modifiable factors such as personal lifestyles and environmental factors, such as smoking and weight management.

Activities within Last Year

Carteret County Health Department Outreach Activities: Carteret County Health Department partnered with the Carteret Comprehensive Cancer Center to provide free annual cancer screenings. Two clinics are offered, one for skin cancer which is held in May and one for breast cancer in October at the Health Department. In 2015, 37 residents attended the breast cancer screening and 98 attended the skin cancer screening. In addition, the Health Department provides educational materials, media releases to the public during cancer awareness months and heart month.

Carteret HealthCare: The hospital hosted a health fair in February 2015 for Heart Month. The hospital continues to offer the telehealth program and care transition services to heart patients to help reduce readmissions. In addition, they also offer cardiac and pulmonary rehab programs to patients. Carteret HealthCare constructed a new wing for cancer care which expanded the number of beds/chairs for treatment. In addition, the hospital offers a new service in Radiation Oncology, Stereotactic Radiosurgery and Stereotactic Body Radiation Therapy (SRS/SBRT). Carteret HealthCare in collaboration with UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center offer monthly community education sessions for any Carteret resident.

Morehead City Parks and Recreation: Morehead City Parks and Recreation to create a tobacco-free policy for all parks in Morehead City in 2015.



FREE SKIN CANCER SCREENING
Protect the skin you are in.
MAY 2, 2015
8:00 AM - 1:00 PM
At the Carteret County Health Department
3820 Bridges Street, Morehead City

Free screenings provided by local dermatologists.

CALL 808-6200 to schedule your appointment.

hosted by:
Carteret General Hospital's
Raab Cancer Center
along with
Carteret County Health Department,
Academy of Dermatology and the
American Cancer Society.

CARTERET GENERAL HOSPITAL
Our Mission Is Your Health

Goal:

By 2017, reduce to 7.0% of individuals aged 12-19 years reporting use of prescription drugs in the past 30 days.

7.7% of middle and high school students reported using prescription drugs in the past 30 days.

*2013 PRIDE Survey
Administered in Carteret County Schools
Grades 8-10-12*

Health Priority: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Access

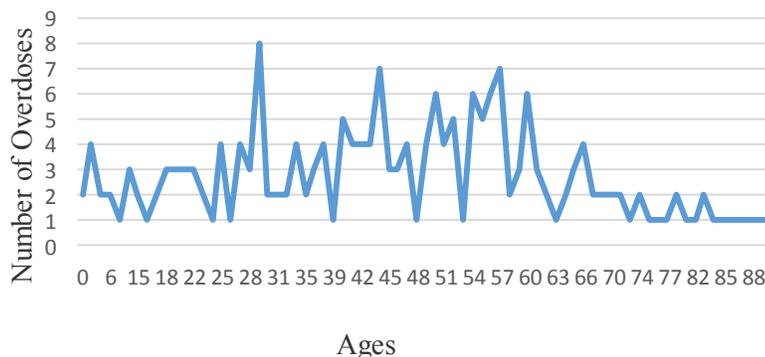
Overview:

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Access are major health problems for Carteret County residents. In Carteret County, substance abuse specifically with prescription drug use (for non-medical purposes) is a growing problem among our adults and teens. According to the National Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration Survey (SAMSHA) reported in 2014 that an estimated 24.6 million individuals aged 12 or older were current illicit drug users in 2013, including 2.2 million adolescents aged 12 to 17.⁵ In 2013, 60.1 million individuals aged 12 or older were past month binge drinkers, including 1.6 million adolescents.⁵

Using the North Carolina Disease Event Tracking and Epidemiologic Collection Tool (NC DETECT), the total number of medication or drug overdoses for Carteret County during January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015 was 206.

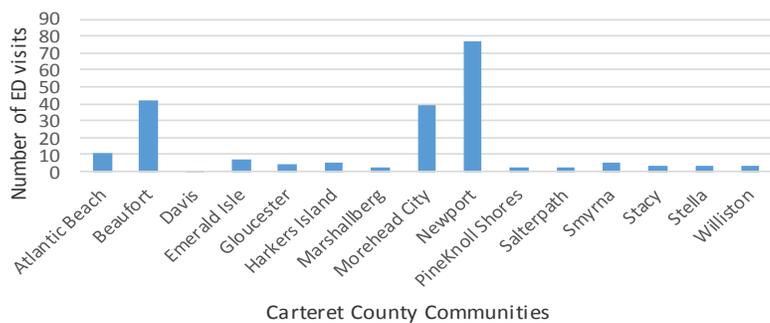
The graph to the right represents Medication or Drug Overdoses by Age for Carteret County Residents from January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015. The average age of Medication or Drug Overdoses in Carteret County during this timeframe was 48.5 years old, with an age range of under one to ninety-two.

Medication or Drug Overdose by Age for Carteret County Residents during January 1, to December 31, 2015



Source: North Carolina Disease Event Training and Epidemiologic Collection Tool, 2016

January 2015-December 2015 Medication or Drug Overdoses by Community in Carteret County



The graph to the left represents Medication or Drug overdoses by community for Carteret County residents from January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015. Out of the 206 overdoses seen last year, the majority of cases were from Newport, Morehead City, Beaufort and Atlantic Beach.

Source: North Carolina Disease Event Training and Epidemiologic Collection Tool, 2016

Health Priority: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Access

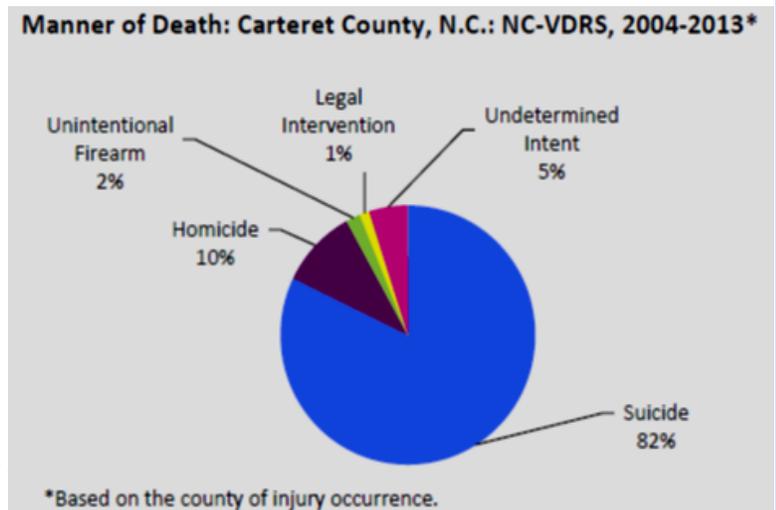
Overview:

Mental Health continues to emerge as a major health problem for Carteret County. Suicide, substance abuse and unintentional and accidental overdoses remain top concerns in Carteret County related to mental illness. Suicide, a preventable health problem, is in the top ten leading causes of death for Carteret County. From 2010-2014, death rates due to suicide (17.8 per 100,000 population) has decreased slightly (18.5 per 100,000 population) since 2009-2013.⁶

The graph to the right represents all the fatal injuries from violence that occurred during 2004-2013 in Carteret County. For the years 2004-2013, there were 163 violent deaths in Carteret County.⁷

There were 134 suicides (82%), 16 homicides (10%), three unintentional firearm deaths (2%), and eight deaths of undetermined intent (5%).⁷

Source: Injury and Violence Prevention Branch
www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov



Activities within Last Year

Carteret County Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force: The Carteret County Health Department partnered with Carteret County Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force to accept Project Lazarus funds to secure a permanent prescription drop box in an additional location and develop educational materials. The task force worked with Carteret County Schools to create a “Grim Reaper Day” at the three high schools. The Grim Reaper Day was actually created to educate students on alcohol but because of the prescription drug overdoses, the event was modified to reflect the issues in Carteret County. In addition, the task force hosted the annual “Kickin it for Recovery” where youth and law enforcement come together to play a game of kick-ball and learn about substance abuse.

Carteret County Sheriff’s Department: Law Enforcement continue to provide naloxone training to all sheriff deputies. The sheriff’s department continues to offer a countywide “Pills Can Kill” and Medicine Drop Off events. This year the Sheriff Department collaborated with Morehead City Police Department and District Attorney to create “Operation Who’s Next?” which is a joint drug undercover operation targeting illegal drug sales in Carteret County.

Carteret Cooperative Extension Services—Health Rocks: Health Rocks is a healthy living curriculum that educates youth ages eight to fourteen on the consequences of tobacco, alcohol and drug use. The program is being offered in all elementary and middle schools. In 2016, staff hope to implement a high school curriculum.

Carteret County Schools: Carteret County Schools partnered with Trillium (MCO/LME) to bring Rachel’s Challenge to all middle and high schools. Rachel’s Challenge teaches students to start a chain reaction of kindness and compassion. Hoping to make schools safer, more connected places where bullying and violence are replaced with kindness and respect; and where learning and teaching are awakened to their fullest.

Suicide Prevention Task Force: The Consolidated Health and Human Services Board asked the Health Department to take the lead in creating a Suicide Prevention Task Force comprised of partners representing many agencies. In addition, a small leadership group was selected to attend a Suicide Prevention Academy, hosted by UNC, Injury and Violence Prevention Branch, and Department of Health and Human Services.

Health Priority: Economic Development/ Smart Growth

Overview:

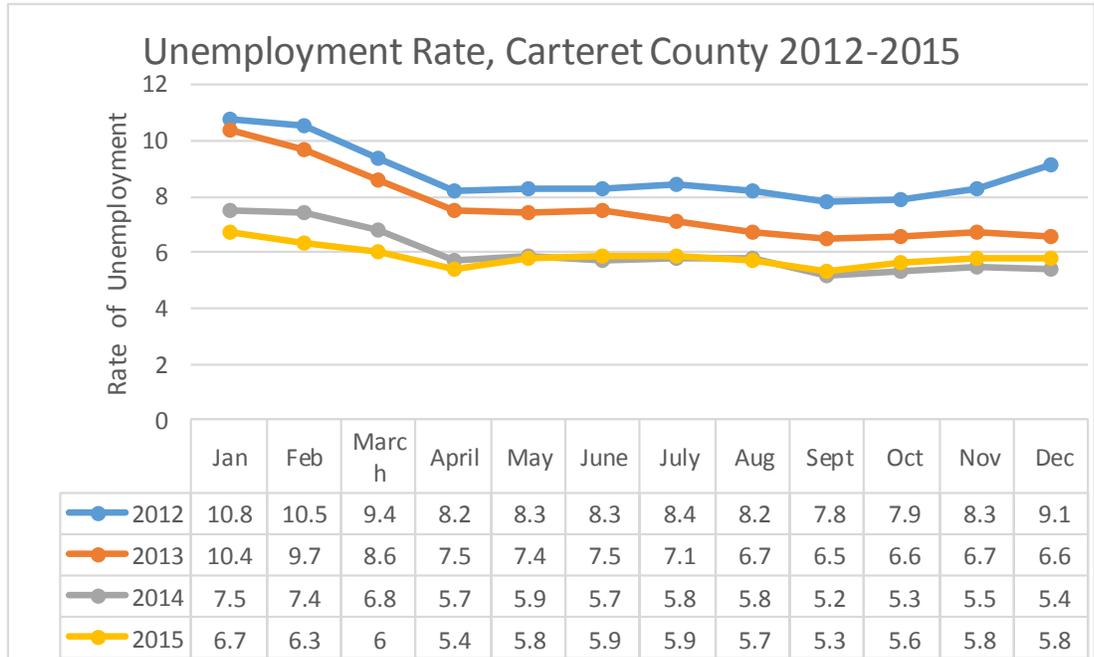
In the 2013 Community Health Assessment, respondents from the community opinion survey and key informant survey identified Economic Development, specifically to increase job opportunities and increase opportunities for smart growth and economic development, as the third health priority to address for Carteret County.

The table to the right shows the unemployment rates for Carteret County during 2012-2015.

When analyzing this data, the unemployment rate has decreased since 2012.

According to Carteret Economic Development, the economy of Carteret County and North Carolina's Eastern Region continues to expand and diversify.⁸

Employment can have a huge impact on the health of an individual.



Source: Employment Security Commission, Demand Driven Data Delivery System, Unadjusted Data Carteret County, NC 2012-2015

Activities within Last Year

Carteret Economic Development Council: Partnered with East Carolina University and North Carolina Commerce to develop and complete strategic economic development plans for municipalities. The plan should be available by June 2016.

Carteret County Local Food Advisory Council: Cooperative Extension Staff and various partners are partnering to develop a local food advisory council. Local food advisory or policy councils are used to study the food systems and determine gaps and economic impact on food production and/or distribution.



How can you become involved?

Emerging Issues/ New Initiatives

Each of the health priorities identified in the SOTCH report are addressed by various coalitions or groups in Carteret County.

You can get involved by participating in one or more of these coalitions.

To learn more, contact

Diana Craft

Carteret County Health Department at 252-728-8550

Emerging Issues

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services for Youth and Adults: There is a growing need for mental health services available to youth, adults and families in Carteret County. The Systems of Care Collaborative/Crisis Consortium, a multi-sectorial partnership, is working to develop a comprehensive list of resources for youth, families and adults. In addition the collaborative is incorporating other programs to provide families and youth the tools and resources to access mental health services.

Emergency Department visits for dental care issues: Emergency Department visits for dental care issues has increased over the years since underinsured and uninsured adults have problems accessing regular dental care.

Increased “e-cigarettes” use: E-cigarettes or “vapes” are growing in use among adults and youth. Contributing factors include ease of access, marketing strategies that target youth, and misconception that they are a tobacco-cessation product.



Public Transportation: Transportation continues to be a concern for some residents in Carteret County. Carteret County Area Transportation System (CCATS) currently provides transportation routes from Beaufort to Morehead City and “call and ride.” They continue to identify ways to increase ridership, and services more convenient for users.

Disease Outbreaks/Ebola /Zika : In 2015, active Ebola cases continued in several countries in Africa. In addition, Zika virus was diagnosed in the regions of Americans in May 2015. Carteret County Health Department receives regular guidance from NC Public Health regarding follow-up care of persons exposed to emerging illnesses.

New Initiatives

Carteret General Hospital: Rebranded themselves to Carteret HealthCare. In addition, they completed the new cancer center, remodeled and expanded the Emergency Room. They continue to recruit new physicians to the area.

Immunization Requirements: Immunization changes went into effect for school-aged children.

Coastal Cycle Coalition: Carteret County Health Department developed a multi-partnership to design a bicycle safety committee. The committee’s mission is to educate on bike safety, advocate for bike lanes, and motivate people to be active. In 2015, the committee members participated in four bike rodeo events.



Carteret County Animal Services Board– The Health Department developed a new animal services board. This board is comprised of various partners to understand animal control services and discuss how to better serve the animals in the county.

Loves and Fishes Recovery: Opened up a new homeless shelter for women and women in recovery.

Health Department Highlights:

The Health Department has been very busy within the last year. In March 2015, Dave Jenkins, the new Health Director was hired.

Administrative: Became credentialed with Medicaid (Carolina Access) and BCBS. Secured debit and credit card machines for card payments. Implemented CureMD for Electronic Medical Records.

Animal Control: Rabies Clinics began offering micro-chipping, in cooperation with the Carteret Co. Humane Society Animal Shelter. Provided rabies vaccinations and microchip clinics to 1219 county dogs and cats.

Clinical Services: The Health Department reviewed and updated the clinic procedures to better accommodate patients and their care. The clinic staff partnered with the Carteret Comprehensive Cancer Center to provide annual breast and skin cancer screenings. In 2015, 37 residents attended the breast cancer screening and 98 attended the skin cancer screening. A new Family Nurse Practitioner, Jessica Harris was hired.

Mobile Dental Clinic (Miles of Smiles): Hired a new Dentist, Dr. Steve Smith.

Environmental Health: The Environmental Health Department offered 6 hours of continuing education to wastewater operators, installers, inspectors and REHS's through a "hands on" class. The staff developed and instituted a plan to comply with Rule .1961 for Type IIIB inspections and exceeded a goal of inspecting 100 systems within the first year. Customers are now able to pay by debit or credit cards for any services. Additionally, facility inspection reports are accessible on the website.

Public Health Preparedness: Provided comprehensive training to health department staff on their roles/responsibilities during a mass vaccination clinic. Exercised the department's disaster/emergency continuity and mass vaccination plan.

Health Education: The Health Education staff participated in 27 local health fairs or events throughout the county. Received a Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation– Health Care Equipment Grant.

WIC (Women, Infant, and Children): WIC now offers yogurt and whole wheat pasta as food options. In collaboration with Carteret HealthCare, the staff hosted a World Breastfeeding walk.

References:

1. Carteret County Health Department Community Health Assessment 2013.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention available at: www.cdc.gov/obesity
3. NC Division of Public Health, State Center for Health Statistics. Available at www.schs.state.nc.us/
4. NC Division of Public Health, State Center for Health Statistics, County Level Data. Available at: www.schs.state.nc.us
5. National Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Survey (SAMHSA) available at: www.samhsa.gov
6. NC Division of Public Health, State Center for Health Statistics, County Level Data. Available at: www.schs.state.nc.us
7. Injury and Violence Prevention Branch available at: www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov
8. Carteret County Economic Development, available at: <http://www.carteretedc.com/business-industry/>

Every attempt has been made to summarize the major activities occurring within Carteret County to address each of the priority health areas, but some programs may not be represented in this report.

Please contact Diana Craft, Carteret County Health Department at 252-728-8550 or by Diana.craft@carteretcountync.gov to ensure that information regarding your program as it relates to one of the outlined priority areas for Carteret County is included in future reports.

Acknowledgements

A special "thank you" to all of the community partners and staff who provided information for the State of the County Health Report.

Thank you for your commitment and dedication to help improve the health of Carteret County residents.

— Carteret County Health Department, Health Education and Promotion Division